

MINUTES
STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING
January , 2012 8:30 am
Marriott
Indianapolis, Denver Room

Members in Attendance:

Warren Baird
Larry Clemens
Bob Eddleman
Bill Mann
Nola Gentry

Members Not In Attendance:

Scott Ham (Participated via Telephone)
Brett Glick

Others in Attendance:

Ray McCormick, IASWCD
Tony Ekovich LaPorte SWCD
Amanda Burks, SWCD
Rita Sharr, Greene SWCD
Sharon Watson, SWCD
Ray Chattman, SWCD
Bill Peterson, SWCD
Jamie Scott, SWCD
Josh Bittner
Mike Starkey, IASWCD
Bruce Shepherd Jasper Co SWCD
Jay Ballinger, Union Co SWCD
Jeff Meinders, IASWCD
Priscilla Kelly, Posey Co SWCD
Glenn Bryard, Kosciusko Co SWCD
Logan Garner, ISDA
Tom Crowe, SWCD
Deb Fairhurst, ISDA
Nan Hammel, ISDA
Laura Fribley, ISDA

Others in Attendance Cont:

Jerod Chew ISDA
Jon Mangles ISDA
Hans Kok CCSI
Jennifer Pinkston ISDA
Jennifer Boyle-Warner, IASWCD
Jim Lake ISDA
Nathan Stoelting ISDA
Roger Kult, NRCS
Tara Henry, ISDA
Jane Hardisty NRCS
Jim Droege, Posey County SWCD
Brenda Gettinger, ISDA
Lois Mann
Meg Leader, Vermillion SWCD
Geneva Rawlins ISDA
Michelle Howell, FSA
Les Zimmerman
Lou Renshaw, IDEM
Mike Schwab, IASWCD
Bonnie Bittner, SWCD
Jim Martin, Jasper County SWCD
Allen Paddock, Union Co SWCD
Larry Strob, Newton Co SWCD
Tom Knapke
Brian Campbell, Elkhart Co SWCD
Larry Burkart, Posey Co SWCD
Jeri Ziliak, Posey Co SWCD
Bobby Hettmansperger
Julie Harrold, ISDA
Nathan Houk, ISDA

- I. 8:30 AM: Call to Order**
- II. Draft Minutes of October and December 2011**
Minutes approved as presented
- III. Clean Water Indiana Budget—Jerod Chew**
Spending is on track with approved budget. The fifth District Support Specialist position (to be located in the northwest area of the state) request is still pending. Jerod noted there are several stages of approval for a new position. At this time, the request has been approved by Indiana State Department of Agriculture and the Lieutenant Governor's Office. The request is now with the Strategic Hiring Committee, which is made up by the State Personnel Department and the State Budget Agency. Upon approval, the position will be posted to the State's Job Bank.
- IV. Temporary Supervisor Appointment**
 - a. Lawrence County-Warren motioned to approve, Nola Seconded. Motion approved
- V. State Soil Conservation Board Report**
 - a. **Chairman's Report-Larry Clemens**
The State Soil Board continues to look at ways to deliver conservation in the future with budget cuts. In August, the board formed a task force to look at how to improve efficiency and effectiveness in

conservation. The task force, made up of Indiana Conservation Partnership members, had their initial meeting December 19, 2011. The next meeting will be January 23, 2012. It is anticipated the process will take 8 months and will conclude with a set of recommendations to be given to the board for consideration. In the next two weeks, Larry will be sending a letter out to district employees and supervisors with more information.

b. State Soil Conservation Board Business Plan Update—Larry Clemens and Jim Lake(See Attachment)

The District Support Specialists have reviewed the SSCB's business plan and noted several accomplishments. Highlights include:

By 2011 work with IN Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and other water quality monitoring agencies and organizations, as well as the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to share baseline data of current pollution load conditions.

IDEM is a regularly contributing agency within the ICP, therefore, the SSCB and ISDA interact with them on a regular basis.

The Division of Soil Conservation, along with IDEM, have been developing the State Nutrient Reduction Strategy. As part of this effort, we are gaining a better understanding of trends and watershed treatment priorities through study of models and communication with the USGS.

By 2012 provide districts with a standardized reporting procedure for reporting income and expenses, accomplishments, federal, state and local dollars leveraged as well as state and district program needs for the coming year.

Completed through the ICP accomplishments report and the new State Board of Accounts "Gateway" system which replaces the old Annual Financial Report.

Note: The full text of the State Soil Conservation Board Business Plan with noted accomplishments and updates are included in the attachments.

VI. ISDA Reports (See Attachment)

Clean Water Indiana Grants- Soil and Water Conservation Districts utilized nearly \$550,000 from the 2010 CWI Grants to support over 250 adult education events, 453 cost-share projects, and training for 365 staff and supervisors. For 2011 CWI Grants, the State Soil Conservation Board awarded \$573,408. Each SWCD was given the opportunity to apply for up to \$7,000 in the following categories: Adult Education, Outreach/Marketing, Cost Share, Multi District Incentive (\$1,000 for participating in a multi-district event and/or initiative), and Capacity Building—includes staffing and leadership development training. Additionally, in the spring of 2011, the SSCB awarded \$84,000 for 5 watershed-based grants. The SSCB awarded \$828,000 to 17 SWCDs, who are partnering with 47 other SWCDs for the 2012 CWI Grants.

Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative- Dan Towery, Barry Fischer, and Hans Kok led CCSI effort for second year. Additional funding for year 3 has allowed the group to hire additional consultants. The website has been updated with additional information.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)-August marked the first anniversary of the CREP expansion from the original three to the current 11 watersheds. At the end of Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011 (October 1, 2010-September 30, 2011), CREP had awarded more than 1.5 million dollars in State funds to landowners, representing 6,118 acres of farmland (i.e. a 35 percent increase from FFY 2010).

Nutrient Reduction Strategy- Members of the ICP (Indiana Conservation Partnership), in conjunction with additional stakeholders, formed the State of Indiana Nutrient Reduction Strategy Workgroup (NRSW) to develop the roadmap of the Strategy. The workgroup met in January and in August 2011. ISDA started developing the first draft framework of the strategy in September 2011 and continued consultations with key stakeholders.

Conservation Tillage Program- NRCS State Staff developed an updated version of the excel spreadsheet used to collect transect survey information so that results of the survey could be determine right off the spreadsheet once the survey was completed. Results from the 2011 Tillage Transect include 28 % of the corn was planted using

conservation tillage with 23% of that being no-till corn, and 63% of the soybeans were planted using some form of conservation tillage with 59% being no-till soybean.

District Support-In addition to the March Area Trainings and the December 14 Statewide Training, the District Support Specialists also planned and facilitated several partner meetings and trainings including IASWCD regional meetings, regional staff meetings, and many other educational events around the state. The District Support Specialists continue to provide direct assistance to districts for developing and/or updating their respective District Business Plans and Annual Plans of Work.

Leadership Institute-3 workshops were held in 2011. 71 participants attended, with 20 graduating. 2011 brought the new program total to 73 graduates. Three workshops are scheduled for 2012.

On-Farm Network®-Nine groups are participating in the program this year. Results from nitrogen stalk sampling continue to come in. Small group meetings will be held in the end of January.

Pathway to Water Quality-The District Support Staff co-chaired the Pathway to Water Quality Committee this past year. Several changes were made to the exhibit this past year including changes in the education area and signage around the paths. Division of Soil staff worked over 30 shifts to support the exhibit during the 2011 State Fair.

Technical Assistance- ISDA-DSC Resource Specialists helped to install over 2800 acres and nearly 250,000 feet of conservation practices and assisted hundreds of individuals annually with various conservation issues. In addition to the 25 Resource Specialists around the state, ISDA-DSC recently received a 319 grant to hire additional staff. The three new staff members are located in the Tippecanoe, Upper Eel and Upper Wabash watersheds.

Professional Development-In the spring of 2011, over 300 ICP employees completed a skills inventory survey. This information will be used to identify ICP training needs, potential trainers, and areas of the state these trainings are most needed. A Technical Review Board (TeRBo) was created to thoroughly examine each of these technical training opportunities. The group subsequently determined what level of training would be needed for each of the topics (Awareness, Application, Certification).

Great Lakes Commission Sediment Control Program- In 2011 two grant proposals for watershed based sediment reduction projects submitted from Indiana were funded. Allen SWCD received a grant for \$353,372 for their Upper Maumee Watershed Project and the Elkhart River Restoration Association received \$397,920 for their project that will be administered in close cooperation with the Elkhart and Kosciusko SWCDs. District Support Specialist Jim Lake serves as the chairman of the Great Lakes Commission Sediment Reduction Task Force.

Technology and Accountability-2011 was the first full year of SharePoint. Districts have now utilized the technology to coordinate calendars, edit and share documents, and receive important notifications and updates. In addition, districts now complete grant reports, grant applications, annual meeting and election documentation in SharePoint.

Western Lake Erie Basin Partnership- During 2011, our District Support Staff representative helped plan and conduct three multi-state educational conferences/workshops.

VII. Partner Reports

- a. NRCS Report-Jane Hardisty
Soil Health will be the focus in 2012. Indiana is being looked at as a national leader in this area. NRCS is close on finalizing information to districts for office space and official policy on rent reimbursement. 2012 NRCS budget remains level. Cuts in all agencies and departments are anticipated in 2013.
- b. IASWCD Report-Ray McCormick
IASWCD continues to work with districts to find permanent solutions to funding problems. Local support from county councils is important for district success.
- c. IDEA—Sharon Watson
Several district employees have retired recently. Districts are working hard to get new employees trained.
- d. FSA Report-Michelle Howell
CRP celebrates 25 years of improving conservation in Indiana. Last year, CRP incentives totaled over 44 million. Over 300 offers were accepted in General CRP sign-up, totaling nearly 7,000 acres.
- e. DNR Report –No Report

- f. IDEM Report –Mary Lou Renshaw
319 funds may decrease by as much as 25% in the upcoming grant cycles. Currently IDEM has \$7M in requests with only \$3M available in funding. Under the recent reorganization in IDEM, the Watershed Planning and Watershed Assessment groups merged under the Division of Water Quality.
- g. Purdue Report –No Report

VIII. Public Comment

- a. Priscilla Kelly, of Posey County SWCD, noted for conservation to be embraced across the state, it is imperative that it be lead at the local level with districts taking charge.

IX. Next Meeting: March 13 Location TBD

X. Adjourn 10:28 AM

Minutes Prepared By: Jennifer Pinkston

Approved By:

DRAFT